

## A BRIEF ENGLISH LESSON: APRIL 04

This month's lesson is about two *prepositions of time* which often get mixed up by German speakers – **by** and **until**. They are tricky because they can both be translated into German as **bis**.

This is the difference in their meaning:

**by** = at the latest, not later than, at any time before (but not after)

*The performance starts at 8.00. We must be there **by** 7.30.  
Please let me know **by** Friday whether you are coming or not.*

**until** = (continuously) up to (that moment)

*He worked **until** 10.00 p.m. and then went home.  
He's going to stay in England **until** March.*

**Ready to test yourself?** Put *either by or until* in the gaps in the sentences below.

1. Mr Brown will be in a meeting ..... lunchtime.
2. She should be back in the office ..... 4 o' clock.
3. He' s on holiday at the moment and won' t be back ..... the week after next.
4. I will keep on trying ..... I reach him.
5. Thursday, did you say? Oh, don' t worry. We will know ..... then.
6. She has to stay ..... the letter has been written.
7. We have to collect all the figures ..... the end of the month.
8. He asked if he could keep the report ..... the AGM.
9. I am sure you will have it ..... Tuesday.
10. He' s ill but thinks he' ll be back at work ..... the time of the move.
11. .... the time you get this, we' ll probably have moved into our new offices.
12. The renovation work will probably last ..... December.

**And the answers?**

1. Mr Brown will be in a meeting *until* lunchtime.
2. She should be back in the office *by* 4 o' clock.
3. He' s on holiday at the moment and won' t be back ~~until~~ *until* the week after next.
4. I will keep on trying *until* I reach him.
5. Thursday, did you say? Oh, don' t worry. We will know ~~by~~ *by* then.
6. She has to stay *until* the letter has been written.
7. We have to collect all the figures *by* the end of the month.
8. He asked if he could keep the report *until* the AGM.
9. I am sure you will have it *by* Tuesday.
10. He' s ill but thinks he' ll be back at work ~~by~~ *by* the time of the move.
11. *By* the time you get this, we' ll probably have moved into our new offices.
12. The renovation work will probably last *until* December.